

Quality assurance is a planned and systematic pattern of all actions necessary to provide adequate confidence that adequate technical requirements are established; products and services conform to established technical requirements; and satisfactory performance is achieved.

Quality audit is a systematic examination of the acts and decisions with respect to quality in order to independently verify or evaluate the operational requirements of the quality program or the specification or contract requirements of the product or service.

Quality program is a program which is developed, planned, and managed to carry out cost-effectively all efforts to effect the quality of materials and services from concept exploration and definition through demonstration and validation, engineering and manufacturing development, production and deployment, and operations and support.

[56 FR 36460, July 31, 1991, as amended at 60 FR 33145, June 27, 1995]

246.102 Policy.

Departments and agencies shall also—

(1) Develop and manage a cost effective quality program to ensure that contract performance conforms to specified requirements. Apply the quality program to all contracts for services and products designed, developed, purchased, produced, stored, distributed, operated, maintained, or disposed of by contractors.

(2) Conduct quality audits to ensure the quality of products and services meet contractual requirements.

(3) Base the type and extent of Government contract quality assurance actions on the particular acquisition.

(4) Provide contractors the maximum flexibility in establishing efficient and effective quality programs to meet contractual requirements. Contractor quality programs may be modeled on military, commercial, national, or international quality standards.

[56 FR 36460, July 31, 1991, as amended at 60 FR 33145, June 27, 1995]

246.103 Contracting office responsibilities.

The contracting office may conduct product-oriented surveys and evaluations to determine—

(1) The adequacy of the technical requirements relating to quality; and

(2) Product conformance to design intent. Consider conducting the surveys and evaluations in conjunction with the activity responsible for technical requirements.

(a) Contracting offices are also responsible for—

(i) Assisting the technical activity in improving the quality requirements for contracts when first identified for competitive acquisition; and

(ii) Assisting in determining the cause of problems noted in user experience reports.

(b) The contracting office must coordinate with the quality assurance activity before changing any quality requirement.

(c) The activity responsible for technical requirements may prepare instructions covering the type and extent of Government inspections for acquisitions that are complex, have critical applications, or have unusual requirements.

(i) In preparing the instructions, the technical activity shall consider, as applicable—

(A) The past quality history of the contractor;

(B) The criticality of the material procured in relation to its intended use, considering such factors as—

(1) Reliability;

(2) Safety;

(3) Interchangeability; and

(4) Maintainability;

(C) Problems encountered in the development of the material;

(D) Problems encountered in other procurements of the same or similar material;

(E) Available feed-back data from contract administration, receiving, testing, or using activities; and

(F) The experience of other contractors in overcoming manufacturing problems.

(ii) The instructions shall—

(A) Be kept to a minimum;

(B) Comply with 246.470-2; and

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(C) Be prepared on a contract-by-contract basis.

(iii) The instructions shall not—

(A) Serve as a substitute for incomplete contract quality requirements;

(B) Impose greater inspection requirements than are in the contract;

(C) Use broad or general designations such as—

(1) All requirements;

(2) All characteristics; or

(3) All characteristics in the classification of defects;

(D) Be used for routine administrative procedures; or

(E) Specify continued inspection requirements when statistically sound sampling will provide an adequate degree of protection.

(iv) After issuing the instructions, the technical activity—

(A) Must provide the contract administration office available information regarding those factors which resulted in the requirement for Government inspection;

(B) Must periodically analyze the need to continue, change, or discontinue the instructions; and

(C) Must advise the contract administration office of the results of the periodic analyses.

246.104 Contract administration office responsibilities.

(f) The contract administration office shall continue to follow any specific written instructions received from the contracting office until the contracting office acts on a recommendation.

Subpart 246.2—Contract Quality Requirements

246.202 Types of contract quality requirements.

246.202-4 Higher-level contract quality requirements.

(1) Higher-level contract quality requirements are used in addition to a standard inspection requirement.

(2) Higher-level contract quality requirements, including nongovernment quality system standards adopted to

meet DoD needs, are listed in the DoD Index of Specifications and Standards.

[60 FR 33145, June 27, 1995. Redesignated and amended at 60 FR 61599, Nov. 30, 1995]

246.203 Criteria for use of contract quality requirements.

(c) *Criticality.* Acquisitions of critical items, whether peculiar or common, shall have contract quality requirements.

Subpart 246.3—Contract Clauses

246.370 Material inspection and receiving report.

(a) Use the clause at 252.246-7000, Material Inspection and Receiving Report, in solicitations and contracts when there will be separate and distinct deliverables, even if the deliverables are not separately priced.

(b) When contract administration is retained by the contracting office, the clause at 252.246-7000, Material Inspection and Receiving Report, is not required for—

(1) Contracts awarded using simplified acquisition procedures;

(2) Negotiated subsistence contracts;

(3) Contracts for fresh milk and related fresh dairy products;

(4) Contracts for which the deliverable is a scientific or technical report;

(5) Research and development contracts not requiring the delivery of separately priced end items;

(6) Base, post, camp, or station contracts;

(7) Contracts in overseas areas when the preparation and distribution of the DD Form 250, Material Inspection and Receiving Report, by the contractor would not be practicable. In these cases, arrange for the contractor to provide the information necessary for the contracting office to prepare the DD Form 250;

(8) Contracts for services when hardware is not acquired as an item in the contract; and

(9) Indefinite delivery type contracts placed by central contracting offices which authorize only base, post, camp, or station activities to issue orders.

[56 FR 36460, July 31, 1991, as amended at 64 FR 2598, Jan. 15, 1999]